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GRIHAC P44AUS

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EXAMINER

PAPAPIETRO, JACQUELINE M

ART UNIT

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3739

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 15-16, 18-19, 21, 27, 29-30 and 32-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berke in view of Tomic-Edgar et al (US 6277144 B1).

Berke discloses a surgical warming blanket (10) comprising at least two layers (see Fig 5) capable of forming hollow air space between the two layers (hollow legs 13 and 14, Fig 1) for receiving warmed air from a heating unit (11), the two layers and air space being arranged in operation to form a substantially tubular arrangement at least partially surrounding a patient receiving space (see Fig 1), whereby when warm air is passes into the air space the warm air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the blanket (column 2 lines 34-40), to maintain warm air within the patient receiving space, the patient receiving space being arranged to receive the patient's body and allowing access to the patient's body for surgery without disturbing the blanket (as is clearly shown in Fig 1). Berke does not specifically disclose that one of the two layers of the blanket has a portion of its surface formed of pervious material so that the air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the entire surface of the pervious material. Berke also does not disclose a blanket base for the patient to lie on.

Tomic-Edgar et al teaches an inflatable patient warming apparatus similar to the Berke apparatus (see Fig 1A), wherein there is an external surface layer (400)

constructed of any soft material suited for contact with a patient's body (column 6 lines 52-59). With the configuration taught by Tomic-Edgar, the warmed air is delivered to the patient receiving space via the entire surface of the pervious material. Tomic-Edgar also teaches a continuation of one of the layers provides a blanket base within the patient receiving space, arranged for the patient to lie on (column 4 lines 8-19). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Berke by including an external surface layer as taught by Tomic-Edgar in order to provide a soft material to contact a patient's skin, and by adding the blanket base, as taught by Tomic-Edgar in order to add structural stability to the apparatus.

Regarding claims 16, 18-19, 21 and 30, Berke in view of Tomic-Edgar discloses the surgical warming blanket described above, wherein the tubular arrangement surrounds the patient receiving space on three sides (see Figs 1 and 2), wherein the surface of the blanket is arranged to be fluid repellent (column 3 line 33-34), and wherein the surgical warming blanket is sized and shaped so that the patient receiving space is arranged to receive a human (see Fig 1) and is also capable of receiving an animal (such as a large dog or a monkey), and a small animal (small being a relative term and including a monkey or small cow) whereby to maintain warmth of the human or animal.

Regarding claims 27, 29 and 32-36, Berke in view of Tomic-Edgar discloses a method of warming a patient comprising the steps of receiving the patient within a patient receiving space within which the patient's body is accessible for surgery, and passing warmed air into a patient receiving space to keep the patient warm utilizing the

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surgical warming blanket as described above (see the abstract, column 1 lines 15-24, and column 2 lines 10-11).

Claims 22-26 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berke in view of Tomic-Edgar and Hagopian (US 4963997).

Berke in view of Tomic-Edgar discloses a heating unit (11) for the patient warming system described above, the heating unit including a delivery port (opening 16, Fig 3) for delivering warmed air to the patient warming blanket, described above, and a safety monitoring means for automatic shut-off (column 3 lines 6-8); the heating unit being arranged to heat the air to a range of temperatures, including up to 46 degrees C (column 3 lines 3- 6). Berke does not disclose a pressure sensor feedback system. Hagopian teaches an inflatable patient support system (Fig 1) with a control unit (10), pumps (22 and 24) and ports (88 and 90) for delivering air to the device and a feedback means for determining whether a patient warming blanket is attached; wherein the feedback means includes a pressure sensor for sensing back pressure on the air delivery port (column 4 line 65- column 5 line 17). Furthermore, pressure feedback systems are well known in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the invention of Berke by adding the pressure sensor feedback system as taught by Hagopian to the automatic shut-off safety mechanism in order to appropriately inflate the patient warming blanket to desired values when the blanket is attached.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on December 19, 2007 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JACQUELINE PAPAPIETRO whose telephone number is (571)272-1546. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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